

Environment

Projects underway to close former coal yard, cap demolition landfill site

By Rob Schuette, Triad Staff

A project at Fort McCoy to move the former coal yard closer to closure in accordance with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource (DNR) requirements includes using excavated coal residual as part of the grading layer for the installation's demolition landfill site. This joint project will help protect the environment and save several hundred thousand dollars, said Al Balliett and Tim Gelhaus.



Employees from Dakota Intertek use scoop loaders to remove material from the old coal yard on South Post at Fort McCoy . (Photo by Rob Schuette)

Balliett, chief of the installation's Plans Division, Environmental Branch for the Directorate of Support Services (DSS), and Gelhaus, the environmental manager for VT Griffin, the contractor for DSS, said the project began as a closure project for the former coal yard. The coal yard has not been used actively since the mid-1990s when Fort McCoy transitioned from using coal to natural gas and liquid propane for heating, Balliett said.

"We had separate projects planned to close the former coal yard and to cap the demolition landfill," Balliett said. "When the Wisconsin DNR wanted us to remediate the former coal yard, I approached them to combine the two projects."

The soil and coal residual contained trace contaminants so it would have had to be disposed of in a certified landfill, Balliett said, which would have carried a high cost. The combined project is estimated to save the installation an estimated \$200,000.

The excavated soil will be used as grading layer fill in the capping process of the demolition landfill, he said. It would not pose any danger as it will be encapsulated beneath a geo-textile membrane impregnated with bentonite clay. The soil will help create a slope gradient of approximately 6 percent to allow the water to run off from the site. The clay will become nearly impermeable to water after it becomes wet and greatly reduce water infiltration down into the material underneath it, he said.



Employees from Dakota Intertek use dump trucks to deposit material from the old coal yard at the demolition landfill at Fort McCoy . (Photo by Rob Schuette)

Backfill material for the excavated areas within the former coal yard has been provided by the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security and the Biological and Cultural Resource Team dredging project at Swamp Creek. Approximately 10,000 cubic yards of sand will be used between the former coal yard and the demolition landfill, yielding an approximate cost savings of \$50,000 by not using sand from an off-post location.

"We've been using the demolition landfill less and less over the years so now is a good time to close it," Balliett said.

Gelhaus said the demolition landfill is the last landfill still in use at the installation, and its continued use could present potential liability problems to the installation. The wood waste in the landfill has been pushed up into a much smaller area to meet the slope gradient requirements, Gelhaus said. Any of the future wood waste material generated will be dispensed in roll-off dumpsters for proper disposal or recycled for reuse, such as pallets, he said.

"This project is a win-win for the installation," he said. "It will help protect the environment and provide opportunities to improve the rail-loading capabilities."

[[Top of Page](#)]

[[Triad Online Home](#)]